



## Welcome Rock Climbers!

First and Foremost – Although no admission fees of any kind are charged, all visitors who intend to climb in Muir Valley must read our RULES AND WARNINGS and execute our On-Line WAIVER prior to climbing here. Please remember that rock climbing is a dangerous sport that can result in your injury and death. Responsible, experienced climbers may climb any of the established open routes but do so at their own risk, *which is significant!*

The single-pitch sport and trad climbing routes in Muir Valley are among the finest in the Eastern U.S. Over 400 routes range in difficulty from 5.2 to 5.14a and terminate at rock anchors from 20 to 100 feet from the ground. Muir also includes a few two-pitch routes and bouldering cliffs. Pockets, crimpers, splitters, chimneys, dihedrals, and arêtes abound.

Some of the climbs in Muir valley are Traditional Routes (Trad), meaning there are no mechanical aids added to the rock to offer climbers a safer way to attach themselves to the rock wall. Trad climbers carry with them removable mechanical devices (pro) that they place into pockets and cracks to provide attachment for their climbing rope. Some of the trad routes include top rock anchors at the tops of the climbs. A trad climber's pro offers them some protection from falling. Because it is not possible to monitor how well trad climbers place their gear, they are totally responsible for their personal safety.

Most of the established routes in Muir Valley are Sport Routes, which means that from the bottom to the top of the climb, there are several rock anchors onto which a climber can clip her rope to provide some protection from falling. At the top of the sport routes are top rock anchors, from which a climber can rappel from when he is finished with that particular climb.

Please understand that rock anchors, and any other artificial installations found in Muir Valley, such as, but not limited to, chains, hangers, cable leaders, and quick links, are placed there for the convenience of the installer and/or owner of the property and they offer you absolutely no guarantees to your personal safety! Any use of these installations is undertaken solely at the risk and discretion and risk of the individual so choosing to utilize them. Because it is not possible to continuously monitor the quality of the rock or the structural integrity of rock anchors, a risk of unknown degree exists on all Muir Valley Climbs. The American Safe Climbing Association states, "No bolt is ever guaranteed, and trusting a bolt with your life is always a gamble." If you are unwilling to accept full responsibility for this risk, then do not climb in Muir Valley!

Be sure to read updated information about Muir on the bulletin board at the pavilion before going out to climb. There is also a large map there of the Valley showing how to get to the more than 30 climbing areas within Muir.

The Muir Valley owner—***the Muir Valley organization***—is grateful for donations, which may be made at the pavilion donation box, made on line by PayPal or credit card on the Community page of this website or sent to Muir Valley, 50 Road, Rogers KY 41365. Donations may also be made by contacting [fomv.treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:fomv.treasurer@gmail.com) . Monetary donations and donations of time and effort made by volunteers help Muir Valley to continue to remain open to climbing.

# New to Rock Climbing

Muir Valley extends a welcome mat to climbers brand new or relatively new to this exciting sport. To help assure your first adventures on these beautiful rock faces are safe and exhilarating, the Muir Valley owners offer the following advice:

1. First and foremost, to climb in Muir Valley you are required to first fill out a waiver for yourself. It also covers any children under 18 years of age who accompany you. [Click here](#) to sign an on-line waiver for climbing in Muir Valley.

2. If you have never climbed outdoors before—regardless of your experience in a climbing gym—you would be wise to hire a rock climbing guide to help introduce you to the sport. [Click here](#) for a list of excellent guides who are permitted to guide in Muir Valley.

3. Because there are very few places in the Red River Gorge area where a rope system can be set up atop a climb, you will need to learn how to lead climb early on. This is best done under the watchful eye of an expert on a climbing route that is well below your level of skill. Some climbing gyms offer training in lead climbing. And most guide services in the Red can provide you with this training.

4. Learning to lead climb is only half the equation. You will also need to have a partner to belay you who has also been trained in lead belaying. This skill is hugely different than the simple skill of belaying a top-roped climber in a gym. Several climbing accidents have happened recently due to a belayer not knowing how to safely belay the lead climber.

5. Cleaning the anchors is a very important technique that all climbers need to know how to perform. This is the act of retrieving one's gear after finishing a climb and before descending back to the ground. Improper cleaning and descending have resulted in several serious accidents in recent years. To provide you with a safe place to practice your anchor cleaning skills, the Muir owners have installed several sets of top anchors at locations around the Valley and at a height of less than 8 feet. These practice anchors are just like the ones at the tops of climbs, yet they allow for an instructor to stand by to closely observe your actions and offer coaching advice.

[Click here to see a photo instructional tutorial on how to safely clean a top anchor system and rappel off a climb.](#)

6. Observe two basic rules—especially during your first few dozen climbs: 1) Always wear a helmet—both as a climber and as a belayer. Many a time a serious accident has been avoided because a helmet was employed. and 2) Stick clip the first bolt. Countless ankle injuries, along with more serious types, could have been avoided by using one of these tools. A stick clip is simply a telescoping painters' pole with a gadget on the distal end that grasps one of your quickdraws, with the rope going through the lower carabiner. You can reach up and clip your draw onto the first bolt about 15 feet off the ground, so that you are essentially on a belayed top rope climb until you reach the first bolt. If at any time you pop off the wall before reaching the first bolt, your belayer can prevent you from hitting the ground.

7. Once you have mastered the basic skills of lead climbing, belaying, and cleaning anchors, you should gain experience by climbing with skilled, responsible climbers who can help you in honing your skills

# Professional Guiding Rules

*All guides, either working independently or with guiding companies, must be approved by the Muir Valley Owner—Friends of Muir Valley—prior to guiding here.*

All independent guides and guiding companies must have guiding liability insurance in effect and “Additional Insureds Certificates” on file with the Muir Valley owners prior to guiding paying clients in the Valley. These Additional Insured Certificates should list Friends of Muir Valley (**FOMV**), Officers and Board of Directors of Friends of Muir Valley, and Richard and Elizabeth Weber, Muir Valley's previous owners.

All guides must meet these requirements:

1. Be currently certified by the American Mountain Guide Association (AMGA) at the level of Single Pitch Instructor (SPI) or higher.
2. Be an apprentice guide, who is working toward completion of his training and certification with AMGA and who is working directly for a certified SPI. This apprentice guide, when with a client(s) at the cliffs, must be in sight of and under direct supervision of a certified SPI.

Guides working in Muir Valley must have an up-to-date certification in Wilderness First Aid or, preferably, Wilderness First Responder. Guides must be fully knowledgeable of Muir Valley's Emergency Procedures.

Guides agree to notify the **FOMV** prior to guiding any clients in Muir Valley, specifying the following:

- Name(s) and contact information of the guides (who must meet the qualifications outlined above),
- Date(s) of guiding in Muir,
- Number of clients in their party,
- And, if more than 4 clients, the wall(s) within Muir to which they plan to take their clients.

The preferred method of notification is by email to [fomv.guiding@gmail.com](mailto:fomv.guiding@gmail.com) or a phone call (or message) to the FOMV Professional Guide Services Coordinator, Mark Ryan at **513-309-2895** is acceptable.

For each guided group both the climber and belayer must wear climbing helmets when climbing, belaying, and when in the immediate area where climbing is taking place.

Guides must be familiar with and ensure that both they and their clients follow the WARNINGS AND RULES published for the general public at Muir Valley. And their clients must sign a Muir Valley WAIVER prior to climbing here, either on this website or by paper waiver available at the kiosk at the main parking lot.

Muir Valley is developed, maintained, and operated by donations and volunteer labor, with the expenses and labor being paid for by **FOMV**. Neither the owners, nor any of the other volunteers earn any money from use of Muir Valley. However, rock climbing guide services do use Muir to earn money.

Your clients, by paying your guide fees and by tipping you for your services, usually assume that they are paying you for the complete experience, including providing the location. Please consider either recommending to your clients that they donate for use of the property or by making a donation yourself.

## Bringing a Group?

If your group numbers more than six, please follow these guidelines:

1. If at all possible, please contact the Muir Valley owners prior to your trip here. They can help to make your visit go more smoothly. Muir is a busy place—especially on weekends. Please respect others' rights to access the climbs.
2. Please don't monopolize the routes. If you put up a rope, either use it, let others use it, or take it down.
3. Please keep the chatting to a minimum. Noise from radios and yelling out beta can be very distracting to others in the vicinity and can be a real safety concern when a climber and belayer are not able to hear each other.
4. Please do not put up hammocks. They are rough on trees and often take up space in areas where access is needed.
5. If your group includes members relatively new to climbing and belaying, please be sure they wear helmets and use back-up belayers.
6. As with all visitors, please practice Leave No Trace ethics and use the restrooms provided in three locations along the Valley floor.

## In case of Emergency

1. Ensure that the accident scene is safe and that the injured person(s) and others in the immediate area are out of danger.
2. Do not attempt to move a seriously injured person; keep him/her still and as comfortable as possible.
3. Identify the person with the highest level of wilderness medical training and experience available in the immediate vicinity to attend the injured person.
4. Because cell phone reception is non-existent in most of Muir Valley, find the nearest emergency radio station (Marked with red stars on this map), unscrew the bottom of the tube, and retrieve the 2-way radio. Push and hold the ON button until the radio beeps; it is now on. Push the button on the left side to talk and state that you are reporting a medical emergency.

a. If your call for help on the 2-way radio is answered, describe the emergency and its location. On most days, **Muir Valley Rescue** volunteers will be monitoring this emergency channel, however, there is NO GUARANTEE that volunteers will be monitoring the radios at the time you report an accident. Release the red button to listen. Radio reception can be poor – keep trying. When you get a response, tell them which way is the scene of the emergency, or the station number from which you are calling.

b. If your call for help on a Muir radio is NOT answered, then send someone to the parking lot—where cell reception is good—to call 911. That person is to:

i. Call 911 and explain the nature of the emergency to the Wolfe County Emergency Dispatcher. Tell them to send both an ambulance AND the Wolfe County SAR Team.

ii. Give the dispatcher directions the Muir Valley Emergency Road – NOT the parking lot: 2316 Ky Hwy 715, “Turn in at Weber Valley Lane and follow that road until flagged down by a person who will report the accident location.”

iii. Stay on the phone until released by the dispatcher and remain at a place where you can receive calls to your cell phone from Wolfe County emergency.

5. Contact the Webers by phone (606-668-9066), one of the emergency radios stationed throughout the Valley, or send another runner up to the Webers’ home (beige with green roof). From the valley floor, take the shortcut trail that enters the woods behind the Emergency Rescue Cache Building. It goes directly to the Weber’s house. The driveway heading north directly out of the main parking lot also goes to the house. The Webers are trained Wilderness First Responders and, if they are available, will coordinate rescue activities needed. (No guarantees the Webers or other volunteers will be available!)

6. Station someone on the emergency road that runs the length of the Muir Valley floor near where the injury occurred. This person should meet the Wolfe County ambulance service and SAR team when they arrive. IMPORTANT NOTE: Wolfe County EMTs will usually not leave their ambulance to reach an injured person and do not have a rescue litter. Muir Valley Rescue has a litter & first aid supplies in the small blue Emergency Rescue Cache building at the bottom of the north trail that goes down into the Valley. Wolfe County SAR Team also has a rescue litter.

7. Report ALL accidents in Muir Valley requiring professional medical attention as soon as conveniently possible to the Muir Valley Manager, Roger VanDamme, at 317-855-3015 (email: fomv.adm@gmail.com)